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ABSTRACT

The National Art Education Association (NAEA) has established five specific goals in order to achieve quality art education for all students. This document describes: (1) a definition of quality art education; (2) outcomes of quality art education; and (3) reasons for the NAEA goals. Each goal is identified and interpreted, and reasons for its importance are presented. Goal 1 states that all elementary and secondary level students should complete a sequential program of art instruction that is taught by certified teachers and that integrates art production, aesthetics, criticism, and history. Goal 2 proposes that every student be required to complete one year of high school credit in fine arts, while goal 3 recommends that, for college or university admission, a student should be required to complete one year of credit in visual art. Goal 4 states that, for college or university graduation, a student be required to complete one fine arts course, and goal 5 proposes that every state and local school system appoint a supervisor or administrator to coordinate and direct a visual arts program. (JHP)

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QUALITY ART EDUCATION

Goals for Schools

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An Interpretation

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The earliest evidence of human activity is recorded in visual form. Making and using art to communicate and express ideas, and to convey hopes and feelings has been a basic human activity throughout history; it is a fundamental way humankind has used to give form to imagination, to define the environment, and to express aspirations for the future.

Art is one of the most revealing of human activities and one of the richest sources for understanding human societies and the motives of those who created them.

The role of the National Art Education Association is to promote standards for art education programs that will lead to student excellence in learning about art and its creation.

To that end, NAEA has proposed specific goals designed to bring about a quality art education for all students.

STATEMENT OF THE NAEA GOALS FOR QUALITY ART EDUCATION

1. All elementary and secondary schools shall require students to complete a sequential program of art instruction that integrates the study of art production, aesthetics, art criticism, and art history.

   1.1 art instruction shall be conducted by teachers certified in art;

   1.2 visual arts courses shall be required in elementary, middle, junior and senior high schools, and should not be scheduled to conflict with other required courses.

2. For graduation from high school, every student shall be required to complete at least one year of credit in one of the fine arts.

   2.1 an acceptable course in visual arts shall include in-depth study in the techniques of at least one art medium; practice in several media; and studies in art history, aesthetics, and criticism.

3. For admission to a college or university, every student shall be required to have at least one year of credit in visual art (see 2.1 above).

4. For graduation from a college or university, every student shall be required to have at least one course in one of the fine arts.

5. Every state and local school system shall have a supervisor or administrator to coordinate and direct the visual arts program.

   5.1 an acceptable supervisor or administrator is certified in the teaching and supervision of visual arts education.

What is a Quality Art Education?

Through a quality art education, students learn . . .

- to develop, express, and evaluate ideas;
- to produce, read, and interpret visual images in an increasingly visually-oriented world;
- to recognize and understand the artistic achievements and expectations of civilized societies.

These basic skills in art develop the intellect and increase visual sensitivity. They enable the individual to identify and solve problems more effectively through the manipulation of visual, as well as verbal and numeric symbols; to discriminate among the mass of conflicting visual messages in day-to-day life; and to increase the possibility of communicating with visual images and thus make positive contributions to society.

An education of excellence must include a quality art education for all students.

What is Learned from a Quality Art Education?

NAEA believes making art is central in the art education of all students. In the early grades art-making is a primary vehicle through which children can most fluently tell stories, relate experiences, fantasize, convey messages, express feelings, and give ideas concrete form. But at any age or level of sophistication, making art involves more. It is a complex and integrative process through which students learn to observe, recall, find relationships, make choices, accept or reject alternatives, respond, value, and make decisions.

But different art educators emphasize different aspects of student learning in their art experiences:

- Some place emphasis on the object and believe that to make something of beauty is the major reason for an art education.

- Some emphasize that the reason for art education is for students to learn to look at art objects with sensitivity and pleasure, which leads to an appreciation for the art and values of others.

- Some place emphasis on the creative means students develop to solve problems in art and believe creative and imaginative problem solving is the most valuable outcome of art education.

- Some emphasize the integrative power of art experiences in helping students learn in all subjects and believe this is the purpose of art education.

- Some emphasize how art experiences give the student an outlet for pent-up emotions and change from academic pressure. For them, learning to use art to express feelings and to introduce variety into learning is the purpose of art education.

• Some place emphasis on how art experiences increase the students' perceptual sensitivity and can increase their powers of observation and awareness of the physical and social environment. This, they believe, is the purpose of art education.

These examples demonstrate there are many ways to develop an art curriculum that makes a positive contribution to student learning. But, a quality art education integrates all of these learning opportunities and helps art educators, parents, school administrators, and the students themselves to recognize the educational value, the intellectual content, and the emotional power of the art experience.

Why Has NAEA Set Goals?

The purpose of the **NAEA Goals for Quality Art Education** is to focus attention on and promote art programs that include a comprehensive approach to art learning. Everyone interested in or involved in education needs to understand the contribution a quality art education can make to the students' understanding of their total intellectual and experiential environment.

A balanced education includes a quality art education.

INTERPRETING THE NAEA GOALS FOR QUALITY ART EDUCATION

NAEA GOAL

1. All elementary and secondary schools shall require students to complete a sequential program of art instruction that integrates the study of art production, aesthetics, art criticism, and art history.

What does this goal mean for the art teacher, the student, and the art program?

Sequenced programs:

Few question that learning is most effectively accomplished when it is sequential. Usually instruction is planned so that students move from simple ideas or skills toward more complex and demanding ones, but the sequence can be based on other schemes as well. What is necessary is that there be a relationship between what is known and what is to be learned. It is the skillful and knowledgeable teacher who is able to plan a sequence of experiences that produces maximum learnings.

It has not been unusual for those responsible for art instruction to ignore what would be a given in any other subject area. In nearly anything except art, even an unwitting teacher would find it difficult to provide a "non-sequenced" curriculum for students. For one thing, textbooks, workbooks, and achievement testing demand sequence. Teachers are not free to jump from topic to topic or concept without considering their relationship and the impact relationships have on students' ability to learn. This is commonly understood with respect to science, languages, and math, and it is central to a quality art education as well.

Education in most subjects does not exist for the pleasure or whim of the teacher, but for the need for students to reach expected goals of performance.

Certain ideas argue that sequential instruction in art might seem unnecessary to some teachers, school administrators, and parents. **In each of these examples, the assumption about content and learning in art is wrong:**

- *Children from the earliest school ages have a natural ability to draw and paint and model objects. If they are given materials to work with they can produce art. Those who have talent continue to make art; those with little or no talent naturally lose interest and turn to other activities.*

Sequencing experiences presupposes there is something to be learned, but if children can make art on their own, surely they must already have an innate understanding of whatever that is. This is a wrong assumption.

- *Art is most often taught as an activity which produces an object of some kind. The object is the reason for the activity. Today it may be a painting or drawing, clay or paper shape; tomorrow it will be a different object from a different material. Obviously experiences in such a variety of materials, which have no connection with each other, can't be made sequential. This is a wrong assumption.*

- *Art is really an enrichment activity and a trip to the art museum, a visit or demonstration by an artist, or an after-school art club provide an art program in which sequencing is not necessary. This is a wrong assumption.*

- *There aren't many teaching aids in art. Textbooks and workbooks are few in number and not widely used by most teachers. The inherent organization of art experiences that such books would provide is absent in most classrooms. Most teachers are able to "make up" their own lessons and these are often determined by the materials available; they seem to produce successful results so sequencing does not seem important. This is a wrong assumption.*

- *There are no achievement tests to measure student learning in art and there would be if content existed which should be taught sequentially. This is a wrong assumption.*

These ideas do not reflect NAEA principles which are based on the importance of the intellectual content, educational value, and expressive power of the art experience.

Art does have significant content, and it demands sequential instruction if students are to receive a quality art education.

The Content of Art Instruction Specified by the NAEA Goals

Education means learning.
Art education means learning about art.
What is the content of art education?

NAEA goals describe art program content as an integration of art production, aesthetics, art criticism, and art history. But does the inclusion of these four components mean the goal is to produce professionals in these various specializations?

- No more than the purpose of sports activities is intended to turn every student into a professional athlete.
- No more than the purpose of teaching creative writing in the elementary school is to produce poets or novelists.
- No more than teaching world history in the high school is intended to produce geo-politicians or historians.

NAEA goals don't preclude the possibility that experiences with art production, aesthetics, art criticism, and art history might help students realize there are professional career possibilities in each of these areas, but it isn't their principal purpose.

Art Production

Making art objects has always been and will probably continue to be central in the art education of young people. This is because making art is an activity that comes naturally to the young and can continue to be a rewarding experience throughout life. Art teachers have been more thoroughly trained in art making processes and feel the most confident and competent in working with them.

Without the art object, there aren't many ways to study art.

In a sequential curriculum, each art making activity must be tied to the next so that what was learned today will be used tomorrow, can be added to and made more significant.

- Perhaps learning will be about formal quality of the art object.
- Perhaps learning will focus on techniques or the medium.
- Perhaps learning will be about a concept rooted in historical precedent.
- Whatever the approach, the art making activity should not exist only for itself and is not limited to developing facility in manipulating media. Learning should focus first on ideas that the students begin to encounter and then on discovering how they can best be integrated with all that they have already learned about art.

The act of producing art is not a superficial, recreational activity. Consider, for example, questions that even a seven-year-old must confront in making a painting:

"Playing With My Friends"

Questions requiring observation and recall:

Can you reconstruct in your memory and visualize who you were with?
What were you doing?
Where were you?
Were you standing still, running, or jumping?
What position was your body in?
What colors were you wearing?
Were your clothes patterned or plain?
How many friends were with you?
How were they dressed?
How far away from you were they?
Did you have game equipment?
How much?
What kind?
Who was holding what equipment?
What buildings were in the background?

Questions that initiate intellectual or compositional decision making:

Where are you going to put these figures on the paper?
How large should they be?
Which ones should be the biggest?
Should everyone be included in the picture?
Why shouldn't they all be the same size?
What things should go into the background?
How much detail should you use?
Should the buildings be shown as brick or wood?
Should you put in bushes and grass even if they weren't there?
What about the sun?
Would showing the birds in the tree make your picture too complicated?
Will it be better if some people are left out?
How can you show where this is taking place?
How can you show it was muddy on the playground?

Questions that lead to making aesthetic judgments:

What colors will show best how excited you were?
Will it matter if some people aren't as detailed as others?
How can the background suggest the kind of game you were playing?
Must you put all your friends into the picture?
How large should your picture be?
What will it look like if you paint a border around it?
Should the paper be horizontal or vertical?
Would it be better to paint on white or colored paper?
How many colors will you need to show what you were feeling like?
Will it be better to fill up all the space with color or leave some open?
What positions should the most active figures be in?
Should you use a lot of colors or just a few?
Would it be better to outline the figures in black or not to outline them?

When this seven-year-old has answered these questions (and others only he or she will think of) and has completed the painting, he or she will have demonstrated, among other things, skills in observation and recall, skill in making both intellectual and aesthetic decisions, and skill in the ability to express observations and decisions through artistic means. These become the basis for refining those skills when the next painting or drawing or three dimensional object is done. They are, incidentally, also skills that must be used in writing or telling stories, in playing by the rules of games, or in working cooperatively with others.

This indicates something of the significant learning that can result from even a single painting lesson for a seven-year-old. Such learning takes on new dimensions and becomes even more significant when that same painting is the focus of a discussion about such questions as:

Is this a game children played when our country was new? How do we know that? Were children able to play then? Why? What did they play with? How are they like us?

When you look at this painting, how do you feel? Do you want to play with these children? Why? Is this a nice place to be able to play? What kind of place were these children playing? Was it a safe place to play?

If you look at this painting and one done by another student in your class are they just the same? Why not? Which one is the more exciting? Is that because the game is more exciting or the picture is more exciting? What makes you want to look at these pictures? Would you like to look at one of them longer than the other? Why is that?

What did you learn about texture? Can you think of other ways you could use texture than in a painting? What does texture tell us about things that we see around this room? If you were asked to build a building, would you use texture in it? What might it look like? Are most buildings textured? What makes texture look the way it does? If it is a cloudy day, does the texture on a building look different than on a sunny day? Why is that?

These questions provide the basis for developing knowledge and skills necessary for more sophisticated approaches to the integration of history, criticism, and aesthetics into the production of art objects.

Art production places enormous expectations on students' ability to observe, discriminate, remember, interpret, make decisions, solve problems, compare and make value judgments, extrapolate findings to other situations, and apply known information to new settings.

These are educational expectations of a very high order. They are the outcome of a quality art education.

Aesthetics

Most people know that aesthetics is a branch of philosophy involving very complex and difficult concepts. Among other concerns, it attempts to provide structures for interpreting the meaning of beauty. It deals with complicated ideas about the relationship and response of human beings both to nature and to the objects they make. It is a means of analyzing and interpreting some of the deepest and most human of feelings.

Aesthetics is hardly an easy subject. However, it is learned like any other structure devised to explain aspects of existence. It is learned in a sequential process that allows for the examination of complex ideas in simple ways before dealing with them in complex ways.

In the beginning of its study, aesthetics, like all complicated systems that use complicated language, must yield to simplification for the purpose of basic instruction. As the ideas students study become more intricate and the language more refined (and appropriate to a full examination of the concepts involved), the ability to bring this knowledge to bear on real-life experiences will add to the richness of the interpretations each person can make.

Aesthetics is no more the private domain of the philosopher than is the aesthetic experience that initiates its study.

But how should the study of aesthetics begin with elementary school children? How is it to be sequenced? How is it integrated with the other components of a quality art education?

It is the responsibility of the art teacher to develop a program that includes aesthetic issues, and it begins by posing questions for the students to answer. At an elementary level, some might be:

- *When you look at this picture, does it make you feel any special way?*

- *When you see this color of red in this picture, do you feel warm or cold? Why do you suppose that is? Is there anything else in the picture that might cause you to feel that way?*

- *If you see the sun going down and turning the sky all colors of red and orange and purple, does it make you think of anything else you have ever seen? Does it make you feel different than when you look at a picture of the sun setting?*

- *Why do you think you enjoy making pictures? Do you like to look at them? Why?*

- *When you paint your next picture, can you plan your colors so that when your mother and father look at it they will feel the way you want them to? What do you suppose would make that possible?*

- *How do you make a picture of winter feel cold?*

- *If you look carefully at this portrait that was painted two hundred years ago, how do you feel about the person it shows? Do you think your feelings are the same or different from the way people felt about it when it was first painted? Why would they feel the same? How might they feel differently? What kinds of things might affect the way they felt about it? What things affect the way you feel about it?*

These questions deal with aesthetic propositions. They introduce students to ideas about how they respond to works of art and to beauty found in nature; they give students an opportunity to explore the differences between nature and art and think about how time affects response. Questions such as these also form the basis for understanding aesthetic response and why there are individual differences in the kind, quality, strength, and importance of human response to visual images.

Attention to aesthetics is important to a quality art education. It causes students to question, weigh evidence and information, examine intuitive reactions, and come to tentative conclusions about their experience. It begins with simple, concrete experiences in thinking and discussing art at the very earliest elementary grades. It is not wrong to call such exercises the study of aesthetics; it is wrong to deny children such opportunities as a beginning part of their visual education because "it is too complex for them to understand."

Art Criticism

Evaluation of art's effectiveness, worth, and success in generating significant responses is the right of every person and it is one that everyone exercises. Art criticism is not only what one reads in the Sunday newspaper or the weekly slick magazines. It is not the exclusive property of those who claim to be arbiters of taste because of their educated views.

It may be a simplification, but it is not incorrect to say that when a child looks at two pieces of artwork and says, "This one is more interesting than that," that child is engaged in active art criticism. When any individual likes one art object better than another, that is judgment. Without education this judgment is uninformed.

The role of art criticism as a component of a quality art education is to provide students with opportunities to learn how to arrive at reasoned judgments based on sufficient and appropriate criteria. Students need to learn how to look at works of art and make comparisons between them so they can judge quality, impact, purpose, and value.

Learning art criticism must progress from limited experiences and easily understood concepts toward more complex and extensive ones. Even the most profound and eloquent critics of visual images learned the process that way. Art criticism is the result of careful, sensitive looking and thoughtful interpretation and comparison based on increasing knowledge of works of art. Practice doing this should begin when children are very young so that it becomes their habitual way of arriving at judgments about the value and intent of visual images.

Education does not exist in a free society to produce individuals whose personal judgments simply mimic the views of a specially trained group of critics, but rather to help students acquire the knowledge, develop the visual sensitivity and practice the skills needed to make valid judgments for themselves.

There is an important difference between ". . . because I like it," and "I like it because. . . ." A quality art education will help students in understanding what that difference is.

Art History

It ought to be easy to understand why art history is a component of a quality art education. Surely, there can be no significant study of any area of human activity that does not include attention to what has been done in the past.

In a traditional activity-centered art program, this need has not always been met nor has its importance been clear. But, education is dedicated to understanding what human beings can do to make their own lives and the lives of others better. Lessons learned from the past are invaluable in achieving this understanding.

Students of all ages need to see and explore how humankind has expressed ideas and recorded experiences if they are to have an understanding of the visual wonders that have been created; art history provides a rich source of inspiration for the present and a way of discovering the roots of today's art. But, it isn't possible to learn from the past if it isn't known and understood.

The integration of history with aesthetics, criticism, and art production in a quality art education provides students both the opportunity to learn what governed aesthetic choices in other times and how historical materials affect the criteria used in making aesthetic judgments about their own as well as others' work.

In a quality art education, none of the components—art production, aesthetics, art criticism, or art history stands alone; each combines with the others to reinforce, explain, clarify, or enrich the others.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO INTEGRATE ART LEARNING?

The idea of the integration of these components of a quality art education is based on the belief that they should be effectively united in order to provide complete understanding of art and its value to each individual. In such an art education, art production, aesthetics, art criticism, and art history will contribute to the totality of the students' art learning.

- How is that integration to be achieved?
- Does each component require equal time and equal emphasis at each stage in the students' learning about art?
- Can the components be introduced separately and explored independently and still be integrated?
- Who is to determine the means of achieving the integration a quality art education requires?

Effective integration of a variety of art concepts cannot be prescribed. Skillful and knowledgeable art educators understand the importance of their own role in making the curricular decisions that lead to integration.

Who, after all, is in the best position to understand the readiness of a particular group of students to explore complex concepts?

Who knows better the way to motivate students to ask the questions about the art object, its history, its meaning, or its quality?

Who has the responsibility of defining and explaining the language that has to be used in talking about art?

The importance of the art educator in the integration of the components of a quality art education is inestimable. With a good understanding of how the art object comes into being and why it is made, the teacher will be able to plan ways of conveying that understanding to the students.

Unity is a critical aspect in the effectiveness of the visual object. Unity in the study of its components is critical to the effectiveness of understanding and appreciating the visual object. That unity is based on effective integration.

NAEA GOAL

1.1 Art instruction shall be conducted by teachers certified in art.

What does this goal mean for providing instruction in a quality art education program?

When the content of a quality art program is as demanding as outlined here, only persons with a significant background in the study of all of the components of art will be able or qualified to teach it successfully. Certification does not always guarantee a fully qualified teacher, but it is the best vehicle available to insure individuals are knowledgeable in the subjects they are teaching.

Classroom teachers at the elementary level often are expected to teach art, yet they already have heavy expectations placed on them for teaching other subjects, and usually it is in a poorly equipped self-contained classroom with little supervision or guidance. Generally, elementary certification or endorsement standards do not require sufficient background in art production, aesthetics, art history, or art criticism to enable the classroom teacher to provide a quality art education for students.

The same is true for most who volunteer to teach art or for artists who spend a short and intensive period in sponsored time with students in the schools. Their artistic skills and their interest in the art experiences students have may be above question, but their understanding of the integration of the components of art and their effective sequencing is often limited. Thus, it is extremely difficult for such persons to provide an art curriculum that insures the students receive a quality art education.

While this NAEA goal is that art shall be taught by certified art teachers, classroom teachers and others can continue to make a significant contribution in developing a quality art education program:

- They can support and supplement the art program in ways suggested by the art teacher.

- They can provide the art teacher with insights into special needs and problems of their classes or of individual students.

- They can establish in their classrooms an intellectually and visually stimulating environment so the work of the art teacher is supported by the evidence of the impact of visual images in everyday experience.

- They can support the program by recognizing that the content of the art program is beyond their experience and training to be effective and share that concern with school administrators.

Instruction must be by certified art teachers because a quality art education program is too difficult, too demanding, too complex, and has too much content for anyone to teach successfully who does not have the extensive art training and background that achievement of certification as an art teacher requires.

The effective integration of all of the components of this program also requires special understanding of the ways in which instruction can be sequenced, and familiarity with the expectations that can realistically be placed on students at different grade levels.

This NAEA position does not fault the job done by many conscientious, talented, and dedicated classroom teachers and visiting artists. However, it points out to teachers, school administrators, and the general public the extensive staff development and in-service training that would be required to insure these persons have the background needed to provide a quality art education for all students.

NAEA GOAL

1.2 Visual arts courses shall be required in elementary, middle, junior, and senior high schools, and should not be scheduled to conflict with other required courses.

Why is it important to require visual arts courses at all grade levels?

Requiring programs or specific courses in every school has far-reaching implications for administrators, teachers, and students. New course requirements mean significant changes in scheduling, staffing, program development, and funding.

NAEA recognizes this goal cannot be achieved easily. However, the association is committed to its accomplishment, believing it will contribute to the achievement of general excellence in education.

What students learn of the content of art is not accomplished differently than in other subject areas in the school curriculum. Unless there is a regular, consistent, and appropriately sequenced program in which students participate each year, learning will be seriously impaired. This means presenting simple concepts in the early grades followed by increasingly complex ones as students mature intellectually and emotionally.

With programmatic art experiences throughout the K-12 years, students will complete their education with a visual literacy sufficient to give them control over their responses to the vast variety of visual material they will encounter the rest of their lives.

- They will understand their own intellectual and creative potential and will be able to apply this potential to situations they encounter throughout their lives.

- They will appreciate the magnificence of human creative power as they encounter it through architecture, painting, sculpture, and the other visual arts.

- They will be able to make informed choices among the visual options open to them and will do so based on intellectually and emotionally valid criteria.

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- They will be sensitive to their environment and to the impact individuals have had on nature through the kinds of buildings, cities, roads, and monuments they build.

- They will understand how a better quality of life can result from a knowledge of the past and the artistic triumphs and tragedies that have occurred throughout human history.

- They will have a greater appreciation and understanding of the cultural values held by people in different places and with different backgrounds; they will, therefore, understand and be more tolerant of those people's differences.

- They will find reinforcement for their own beliefs and values by being aware of the contributions made by visually creative people to the betterment of all humankind.

Society has high expectations for the outcomes of education. Well-rounded, intelligent, informed, sensitive, self-confident, and contributing people are most certainly the goal of any society for each of its generations. A quality art education program can make a significant contribution to educating this kind of person.

It can, however, only make that contribution if its content is presented regularly, consistently, and throughout the entire period of each child's formal education.

NAEA GOAL

2. For graduation from high school, every student shall be required to complete at least one year of credit in one of the fine arts.

2.1 An acceptable course in visual arts shall include in-depth study in the techniques of at least one art medium; practice in several media; and studies in art history, aesthetics, and criticism.

What is the intent of a graduation requirement in the visual arts?

The majority of young people complete their formal education with a high school diploma. Although they may continue their education through occasional classes in night school, vocational training programs, or employer-sponsored educational activities, their programmatic education has ended. Society has, in effect, had its last opportunity to stipulate the content of their educational experiences.

Few would argue that this is not as it should be. But most are concerned that what has been learned by the time of high school graduation is not sufficient. That concern is increasingly manifested in more stringent course requirements or by competency testing before high school graduation.

Belief in the importance of a quality art education for all students leads the NAEA to its goal for at least one year of work in art. Obviously, if the goal for required art in every grade level is accomplished (1.2), so, too, will this goal. But realism must temper hope. One year, though not sufficient to insure the rich learnings possible from a complete program in art, will give students insight into how art can affect and influence their lives. Effectively planned, such a program can help students interpret the visual material they encounter daily and make decisions about visual experiences that are based on understanding and knowledge.

There are a variety of visual arts courses that will be of value to the high school student, but any must encompass the four components of a quality art education. Without the substance and content these components provide, such a course requirement would be difficult to justify. With the integration of these components, no student should end his or her formal education without art.

Visual illiteracy is as inexcusable as is verbal or mathematical illiteracy; society needs citizens whose awareness of the quality of their visual surroundings is such that they will strive throughout their lives to improve it and enhance it. This can happen only when young people have the opportunity to become visually literate.

NAEA GOAL

3. For admission to a college or university, every student shall be required to have at least one year of credit in visual art.

Why do students need art to enter a college or university?

When a high school graduation requirement in art exists in every school district, this goal will have been achieved. But until that occurs, NAEA believes college requirements can emphasize to school districts the value of art in secondary education.

In many states, college entrance requirements prove to be more effective than local school district officials in setting high school graduation requirements. NAEA feels that it is important to recognize that high school graduation requirements are often selectively inforced when those requirements come into conflict with "academic" subjects required for entrance to colleges or universities. If, for example, a top student, wishing to enter a good university, finds the school has admission requirements that mean he or she must take another year of math or science or foreign language, it is often possible to have the art requirement waived and another course substituted, even if that student does not wish it.

It is NAEA's goal that colleges and universities require art so that such substitutions will not be possible and that college-bound students will be able to take art; the validity of the art program and its contribution to that student's education is the justification for taking this position.

Sometimes, too, in yielding to college or university entrance requirements, the individual school district may be abdicating its own responsibility for curriculum planning and selection. When this happens, it is allowing a higher education institution to dictate what it should decide based on its own careful study of students' needs. If this occurs and art is not among those things the college requires, students may be denied the opportunity for a quality art education.

Most colleges and universities do not intend that their entrance requirements should set high school graduation requirements for all students. They, as much as anyone, know that not all high school graduates are going to college, nor are all of the graduates of a particular high school going to their college.

There is, however, a fairly universal, though not always justified, complaint from colleges and universities that entering freshmen are inadequately prepared for college, can't read or write, and don't know how to study. The widespread corrective device used is to institute more stringent entrance requirements . . . more "academic" courses . . . and higher entrance exam scores. There is little evidence this tack has any effect on student abilities, and it doesn't allow for student differences in interests and abilities.

NAEA goals for a quality art education are based on a firm belief in the importance of art in the education of all students. Quality art experiences are as important for the college-bound student as for any other. It is critical that those people who will be going into professions such as engineering, medicine, or the law be given the opportunity to be as visually literate as the non-college student, and it is, in part, the college's responsibility to see that they are.

Colleges and universities are important in setting educational priorities. Just as their entrance requirements may establish high school graduation requirements, their entrance requirements indicate the value of curriculum content. It is the goal of NAEA to convince these institutions that a quality art education is a significant element in the total education of young people and should be a part of the background of all students going on to higher education.

NAEA GOAL

4. For graduation from a college or university, every student shall be required to have at least one course in one of the fine arts.

For most universities, changing entrance requirements so they are consistent with the NAEA goal of requiring a visual arts course for each entering student is a difficult process and very slow to accomplish (see goal 3). Such changes occur infrequently, and when they are made, they require a long phase-in period, especially because of the impact they have on high school curricula. In recognizing this problem, NAEA has established this goal that college and university exit requirements should also stipulate a course in one of the arts. This pair of goals thus provides a realistic way for colleges and universities to address this important issue: by requiring art either for admission or graduation, or both, there will be assurance that all of their graduates will have been able to explore the arts at high school or college levels, either in their cultural-historical context or as a studio based, creative activity. In those institutions with the dual requirement, students will have had the opportunity for their college arts experiences to build on a high school background and thus provide a richer understanding of the role of art in their lives.

It is generally felt that persons who attend college and complete their degrees are the people who will constitute the majority of the future leaders of our society. That this group should remain ignorant of the role the arts have played throughout history and can play in their own lives is unthinkable.

Regardless of their career goals or their academic major interests, all students in higher education, whether in liberal arts colleges or professional schools, must become familiar with the arts.

Through this goal, NAEA does not attempt to specify the content of such requirements, but only to emphasize the need for post secondary institutions to bring their many cultural and arts resources to the attention of all of their students, so that as formal education draws to a close for the majority of these people, their lives will be enriched and their aesthetic sensitivity raised in ways which will ultimately enrich our entire society.

NAEA GOAL

5. Every state and local school system shall have a supervisor or administrator to coordinate and direct the visual arts program.

   5.1 an acceptable supervisor or administrator is certified in the teaching and supervision of visual arts education.

To insure a quality art education program throughout a state or local school system, a supervisor of visual arts education is a critical element. This administrator must possess a broad understanding of art education and a detailed knowledge of the philosophy, theory, methods and current issues in art education to be effective. With this background a supervisor can provide leadership and the continuity to produce a sequential and well-balanced art program for all students, K-12.

The primary responsibility of state art directors is to improve the quality and strengthen the position of art programs in all of the schools of their states. Local district art supervisors have a similar responsibility within their own schools. Moreover, both state administrators and local supervisors must guide and coordinate programs and articulate the value of art education to other school administrators, teachers, parents, students, and all citizens of their states and communities.

Art program administrators and supervisors also fulfill other significant roles that help insure a quality art education for all students. A recent study indicated that these tasks include such diverse activities as establishing staff development programs, creating and publishing curriculum materials for teachers' use, identifying and promoting exemplary programs, evaluating schools, programs, and teachers, and working with professional art associations to improve the quality of art education.

Administrators and supervisors also provide leadership that helps continually to improve instruction; they meet regularly with art teachers to implement goals and objectives; they develop systems that provide for an equitable distribution of supplies, equipment, and other resources, and they are largely responsible for the institution of rules and practices that insure a safe and hazard-free environment for both students and teachers.

In a time when curriculum supervisors at both state and local levels are thought by some to represent an unnecessary layer of administration in the schools, it must be emphasized this is not true in the visual arts. It is these administrators who provide continuity and monitor programs to insure that no children, because of individual school administrator bias, are deprived of their art education.

With few textbooks and no testing programs to guide individual art teachers, supervisors are the absolute key to consistent, quality art education.

Art supervisors are the best persons to facilitate the exchange of ideas among teachers, identify for everyone the cultural resources that are available, encourage teachers to pursue advanced degrees, and produce the information that keeps communities informed about the art program and special art events. This is a critical role. It is central in an art education program of substance and quality.

NAEA is committed to this goal because it recognizes the importance of creative leadership in art education at both state and local levels.

A quality art education in one school is desirable. A quality art education in all schools is imperative. A supervisor or art administrator is the only person who is in a position to insure that all children receive equal art educational opportunities.

ACHIEVING A QUALITY ART EDUCATION

Art objects are at the center of the study of art and understanding them and their contribution to the human state is what a quality art education is concerned with. Historical inquiry in art, critical judgment about art, and aesthetic response to art all exist because there are art objects that people have made. A quality art education can only be achieved when teachers and students alike explore the object through each of its four components: students need to make art, respond to art, understand its history, and make judgments about it.

Achievement of NAEA's goals for a quality art education will be possible only through a partnership made up of many agencies and individuals concerned about the education of all school children. When decision makers at all levels recognize the value art has for every citizen and provide the direction and resources necessary to insure equal art education opportunities for all students, the goals will be met.

With a quality art education in place, everyone will benefit.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Because we believe that all students in public and private schools, from kindergarten to grade 12 shall receive art instruction in the schools by certified art teachers, the NAEA board adopted the goals for a quality art education.

It is our purpose to promote and maintain the highest possible degree of quality instruction in visual arts programs throughout the United States.

Our goals have been designed in harmony with those of other associations of teachers and they aim at gaining a place for art as an equal partner in the total school enterprise.

In the implementation of these goals, the members of the National Art Education Association will work toward the improvement of art instruction at all levels.

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